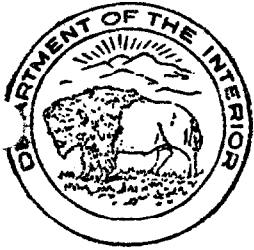


Office Distribution
9-7-48



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release SEPTEMBER 8, 1948

FIRST TUNA LANDINGS RECORDED IN ALASKA

Tuna landings in Alaska were recorded for the first time in the Territory's commercial fishing history, when 220,500 lbs. of albacore were landed in Ketchikan during the last week of August, the Fish and Wildlife Service reported today.

The tuna were caught in the Dixon Entrance area, in waters separating British Columbia from Southeastern Alaska. Landed by Ketchikan trolling vessels making 19 trips to sea, the tuna brought prices of \$520 to \$550 per ton.

R. T. Whiteleather, acting chief of the Service's Branch of Commercial Fisheries, said that it is too early to judge whether the tuna landing was a "freak occurrence," or whether it may lead to the development of a permanent tuna fishery in Alaska. He explained that the Fish and Wildlife Service is watching closely to see what happens.

The situation may be similar to the growth of the important tuna fishery in Oregon and Washington, Mr. Whiteleather stated. In the early 1930's, tuna were unknown in Northern Pacific waters. Then a small catch of 1,000 lbs. of albacore was recorded in 1934. In 1945, 18,208,000 lbs. of albacore were landed in Oregon and Washington, and a vast, permanent fishery has now developed in the two states.

Hit by a serious decline in pink salmon production, Southeastern Alaska's faltering fishing industry would be greatly bolstered by the growth of an albacore fishery.

Albacore is the choicest species of tuna, providing the famed white meat tuna for canning.

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